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ABSTRACT

A survey of 58 senior school administrators was conducted to test opinions commonly held in Manitoba regarding teacher turnover. Among the opinions tested were a) that teacher turnover is presently declining rapidly, b) that few tenured teachers are released, and c) that it is becoming increasingly difficult for newly qualified teachers to obtain positions. Results indicated that turnover was minimal and that nontenured teachers were released at a 7 to 1 ratio to tenured teachers. Conclusions were drawn that indicated a) that although the province is reaching an oversupply of teachers, turnover is not dropping sharply; b) that tenure is serving to ensure a less competent teaching force; and c) that new graduates will be less and less needed in the future. (Three tables of data and three appendixes describing the questionnaire forms are included.) (JB)

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This brief report is based on a small and informal survey of turnover in school divisions, sent to the senior administrators of the 47 unitary divisions and 11 school districts which are members of the Manitoba Association of School Trustees in 1972. Of the 58 survey forms sent out to superintendents or district administrators, 53 (91.38) were returned with the requested data. The intention of the survey was to provide some information to superintendents which might be of interest in itself, and also to test some opinions quite commonly held in Manitoba regarding teacher turnover, for example:

1. that teacher turnover is presently declining rapidly,
2. that few tenured teachers are released, and
3. that it is becoming increasingly difficult for newly qualified teachers to obtain positions.

The primary purpose of this report is to communicate the results of the survey to trustees and administrators in the province. In addition, however, the three topics suggested in the opinions listed above, (teacher turnover, effects of tenure, and the prospects for new graduates,) can be considered in some detail. It is possible that some policy proposals of interest to trustees can be developed.

The first of these topics, overall teacher turnover in the province, is of interest primarily for what it is not, rather than what it is. An external observer would probably assume, on the basis of experience in business or industry, that turnover was largely a function of fit between job and teacher. In a labor-intensive industry such as education,and one which has been so much criticized in recent years, a quite rational assumption would be that turnover was in effect an outcome of attempts to improve the teaching profession, and consequently education as a public service. However, initiates know that this is not the case. By and large, turnover is best analyzed by considering the motivations of teachers. Overall turnover figures are comprised of four major components: retirements, shifts from one administrative unit to another (including inter-provincial and international shifts), temporary breaks in practice for personal or educational reasons, and losses to the profession. Only in the last is there a significant element of impetus other than teacher choice. (Wallin, 1971)

This characteristic of overall turnover in the teaching profession is probably closely related to the matter of tenure amongst teachers, and is of course similarly related to the prospects for new graduates from teacher training institutions.

The data provided by the survey is summarized in the table on the following pages.

TEACHER TURNOVER IN MANITOBA'S SCHOOL DIVISIONS AND DISTRICTS, 1971 AND 1972

| DIVISION | | 1971 | | | | 1972 | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Name | No. | Total No. Teachers* | Total Teachers Leaving Div. No. | Total Teachers Leaving Div. % | TOTAL BEING RELEASED With Tenure | TOTAL BEING RELEASED Without Tenure | Total No. Teachers* | Total Teachers Leaving Div. No. | Total Teachers Leaving Div. % | TOTAL BEING RELEASED With Tenure | TOTAL BEING RELEASED Without Tenure |
| Winnipeg | 1 | 2,344 | 159 | 6.78 | 1 | D.N.A.# | 2,326 | 159 | 6.84 | 0 | 19 |
| St. James-Assiniboia | 2 | 972 | 114 | 11.73 | 0 | 11 | 994 | 104 | 10.46 | 0 | 8 |
| Assiniboine South | 3 | 195 | 32 | 16.41 | 0 | 2 | 207 | 30 | 14.49 | 0 | 3 |
| St. Boniface | 4 | 409 | 52 | 12.71 | D.N.A. | D.N.A. | 426 | 57 | 13.38 | 3 | 10 |
| Fort Garry | 5 | 301 | 54 | 17.94 | 0 | 11 | 306 | 33 | 10.78 | 0 | 0 |
| St. Vital | 6 | 355 | 38 | 10.70 | 0 | 3 | 375 | 34 | 9.07 | 0 | 8 |
| Norwood | 8 | 163 | 21 | 12.88 | 0 | 0 | 170 | 27 | 15.88 | 0 | 5 |
| River East | 9 | 585 | 71 | 12.14 | 0 | 3 | 617 | 51 | 8.27 | 0 | 3 |
| Seven Oaks | 10 | 320 | 35 | 10.94 | 0 | 2 | 330 | 19 | 5.76 | 0 | 2 |
| Lord Selkirk | 11 | 242 | 35 | 14.46 | 1 | 9 | 252½ | 30 | 11.88 | 0 | 1 |
| Transcona-Springfld. | 12 | 380 | 41 | 10.79 | 0 | 7 | 384 | 42 | 10.94 | 1 | 2 |
| Agassiz | 13 | 196 | 35 | 17.86 | 1 | 4 | 199 | 25 | 12.56 | 0 | 2 |
| Seine River | 14 | 198 | 30 | 15.15 | 0 | 8 | 203 | 36 | 17.73 | 0 | 9 |
| Hanover | 15 | 198 | 36 | 18.18 | 2 | 2 | 200 | 36 | 18.00 | 0 | 4 |
| Boundary | 16 | 80 | 7 | 8.75 | 2 | 2 | 80 | 13 | 16.25 | 4 | 0 |
| Red River | 17 | 106 | 31 | 29.25 | 0 | 5 | 102 | 22 | 21.57 | 1 | 10 |
| Rhineland | 18 | 82 | 26 | 31.71 | 0 | 9 | 84 | 16 | 19.05 | 0 | 2 |
| Morris-Macdonald | 19 | 101 | | | | | 97 | 20 | 20.62 | 0 | 4 |
| White Horse Plain | 20 | 87 | 19 | 21.84 | 0 | 9 | 87 | 29 | 33.33 | 1 | 9 |
| Interlake | 21 | 162 | 30 | 18.52 | 0 | 0 | 167 | 27 | 16.17 | 0 | |
| Evergreen | 22 | 152 | 35 | 23.03 | 0 | 1 | 134 | 25 | 18.66 | 1 | 0 |
| Lakeshore | 23 | 130 | 42 | 32.31 | 2 | 10 | 132 | 30 | 22.73 | 0 | 8 |
| Portage | 24 | 247 | 37 | 14.98 | 0 | 1 | 252 | 29 | 11.51 | 0 | 4 |
| Midland | 25 | 112 | 15 | 13.39 | 0 | 0 | 126½ | 21 | 16.60 | 0 | 4 |
| Garden Valley | 26 | 33 | 5 | 15.15 | 0 | 1 | 34 | 8 | 23.53 | 0 | 4 |

| Name | No. | 1 9 7 1 Total Teachers* | Leaving Div. No. | Leaving Div. % | TOTAL BEING RELEASED With Tenure | TOTAL BEING RELEASED Without Tenure | 1 9 7 2 Total No. Teachers* | Leaving Div. No. | Leaving Div. % | TOTAL BEING RELEASED With Tenure | TOTAL BEING RELEASED Without Tenure |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Pembina Valley | 27 | 72 | 7 | 9.72 | 0 | 1 | 75 | 9 | 12.00 | 0 | 1 |
| Mountain | 28 | 95½ | 26 | 27.23 | 0 | 0 | 102 | 22 | 21.57 | 2 | 9 |
| Tiger Hills | 29 | 106 | | | | | 103½ | 26 | 25.12 | 0 | 3 |
| Pine Creek | 30 | 111 | 2 | 19.82 | 0 | 0 | 113 | 15 | 13.27 | 0 | 0 |
| Beautiful Plains | 31 | 123 | 21 | 17.07 | 2 | 6 | 117 | 10 | 8.55 | 1 | 0 |
| Turtle River | 32 | 107 | 15 | 14.01 | - | - | 106 | 21 | 19.81 | - | - |
| Dauphin-Ochre | 1 | 158 | 22 | 13.92 | 0 | 1 | 160 | 22 | 13.75 | 1 | 3 |
| Duck Mountain | 34 | 90 | 16 | 17.78 | 0 | 2 | 90 | 19½ | 21.67 | 0 | 2 |
| Swan Valley | 35 | 155 | 23 | 14.84 | 0 | 3 | 162 | 19 | 11.73 | 1 | 2 |
| Intermountain | 36 | 134 | 31 | 23.13 | 0 | 5 | 129 | 31 | 24.03 | 0 | 10 |
| Pelly Trail | 37 | 125 | 29 | 23.20 | 0 | 5 | 123 | 22 | 17.89 | 2 | 2 |
| Birdtail River | 38 | 153 | 37 | 24.18 | 2 | 9 | 143 | 32 | 22.38 | 3 | 7 |
| Rolling River | 39 | 190 | 33 | 17.36 | 1 | 2 | 183 | 20 | 10.92 | 2½ | 5 |
| Brandon | 40 | 387 | 31 | 8.01 | 1 | 0 | 375½ | 25 | 6.65 | 1 | 4 |
| Fort La Bosse | 41 | 138 | | | | | 150 | 29 | 19.33 | 0 | 2 |
| Souris Valley | 42 | 84 | 22 | 26.19 | 0 | 1 | 81 | 16 | 19.75 | 0 | 2 |
| Antler River | 43 | 103 | 33 | 32.03 | 3 | 12 | 102 | 27 | 26.47 | 1 | 6 |
| Turtle Mountain | 44 | 126 | 27 | 21.43 | 1 | 3 | 131 | 24 | 18.32 | 2 | 6 |
| Kelsey | 45 | 115 | 3 | 30.43 | 0 | 1 | 125 | 26 | 20.80 | 0 | 1 |
| Flin Flon | 46 | 131 | 23 | 17.56 | 0 | 3 | 139 | 18 | 12.95 | 0 | 2 |
| Western | 47 | 63 | 8 | 12.70 | 1 | 0 | 63 | 12 | 19.05 | 0 | 1 |
| Frontier | 48 | 252 | 25 | 9.92 | 0 | 0 | 268 | 32 | 11.94 | 5 | 0 |
| Sub Totals | | 11,168.5 | 1486 | 13.30 | 20 | 154 | 11,326 | 1400.5 | 12.36 | 32.5 | 189 |
| Unitary Divisions | | (N=44) | | | 0.18 | 1.38 | (N=47) | | | 0.28 | 1.67 |

| Name | No. | 1 9 7 1 Total Teachers* | Teachers Leaving Div. No. | Div. % | TOTAL BEING RELEASED With Tenure | Without Tenure | Tot 1 No. Teachers* | 1 9 7 2 Total Teachers Leaving Div. No. | Div. % | TOTAL BEING RELEASED With Tenure | Without Tenure |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Churchill | | 31 | 15 | 48.39 | 0 | 3 | 29 | 12 | 41.38 | 0 | 2 |
| Lynn Lake | | 35 | 6 | 17.14 | 0 | 1 | 38 | 12 | 31.58 | 0 | 2 |
| Pine Falls | | 22 | 3 | 13.64 | 0 | 0 | 21 | 3 | 14.29 | 0 | 0 |
| Snow Lake | | 27 | 7 | 25.93 | 0 | 0 | 28 | 11 | 39.29 | 0 | 2 |
| Whiteshell | | 43 | 9 | 20.93 | 0 | 0 | 42 | 4 | 9.52 | 0 | 0 |
| Mystery Lake | | 178½ | 34 | 19.05 | 0 | 1 | 199 | 56 | 28.14 | 0 | 2 |
| Totals Divisions and Districts Reporting | | 11,505 (N=50) | 1561 | 13.57 | 20 0.17 | 159 1.38 | 11,683 (N=53) | 1500.5 | 12.84 | 325 0.27 | 197 1.69 |

*Based on MAST membership records.
Districts subsequently consolidated are grouped with appropriate Divisions

#D.N.A. - Data not available

First, the table allows us to describe the pattern of teacher turnover for the province as a whole in the years 1970-1971, and 1971-1972. For 1970-1971, the overall pattern is as follows: of 11,505 teachers employed by responding divisions and districts, 1,561 (13.57%) left the units during, or at the end of, the school year. Only 179 (1.56% of the total teaching staff) were released by the units' administrators, the remainder of those who left resigned. Of those who were released, only 20 (0.17% of the total teaching staff) were tenured.

For 1971-1972, the pattern is similar: of 11,683 teachers employed by responding units, 1,500.5 (12.84%) left the units. Only 229.5 teachers were released, the remainder resigned. Of those released 32.5 (0.27% of the total teaching staff) were tenured.

The first interesting feature of the table is the relative constancy, for the two years, of the turnover figures. This challenges the generally held opinion that turnover is presently declining rapidly, and suggests that at least some positions are likely to be available for new graduates.

The second interesting feature is the relationship between the total of teachers leaving and number released. It should be pointed out here that the questionnaire (see Appendix A) specifically asked administrators to include any form of division-initiated termination of contract, including resignations following administrator suggestion, under the "released" category. In 1971, 13.57% left their employment, but only

1.56% were released; similarly, in 1972, 12.84% left, but only 1.96% were released. Teacher turnover in Manitoba is, as suggested above, very much an outcome of teacher motivation, and seems to have little relationship to concerns about competence, or improving the professional work force in the administrative unit. (Except insofar as incompetent teachers recognize their weaknesses and leave the administrative unit voluntarily.)

It is possible to interpret this overall pattern in at least two different ways; either the administrators of the responding units have a great deal of confidence in their teaching staff, and think it unlikely that the general level of competence can be increased by releasing and replacing teachers, or else it is extremely difficult to release teachers. Numerous conversations with trustees and senior administrators in school divisions suggest that the latter is the case. In general it seems reasonable to conclude that turnover levels are a good deal lower than they would be if administrators were readily able to release teachers who were in their opinion unsatisfactory.

Such considerations lead directly to the third interesting feature revealed by the table. The relationship between releases amongst non-tenured teachers, that is teachers still serving in the two probationary years, and tenured teachers is quite striking. In the two years taken together 356 non-tenured teachers were released as compared to 52.5 tenured teachers, a ratio of nearly 7 to 1. It is surely unreasonable

to conclude that the ratio of 7 to 1 in any way represents differentials in competence. Few people would accept the view that newly appointed teachers in divisions, many of whom are new graduates of teacher training institutions, are highly incompetent compared to the teachers on staff with seniority. Thus the ratio between releases amongst non-tenured teachers is a testimonial to the difficulties which administrators perceive in releasing tenured teachers, rather than to the incompetence of newly appointed teachers. As such, it supports the conclusion previously arrived at, that turnover is at lower levels than administrators think desirable.

Considered in this light, this ratio is extremely significant. The following conclusions can be drawn with varying degrees of probability:

1. The ratio suggests that professional teaching staffs are less competent than they might be with changes in prevailing retention practices;
2. Newly appointed teachers, and particularly new graduates, will need to be outstandingly competent to retain their positions as enrollments decline, since generally probationary teachers will be released as teaching staffs shrink;
3. One of the consequences of the tenure provision of the Public Schools Act, at present, is to deprive new graduates of the chance of competing fairly with established teachers for

available positions, granted the reluctance or inability of administrators and boards to release tenured teachers.

The data presented here becomes more significant when other current trends are considered. First, with regard to turnover, it is probable that the overall teacher work force will decline from 1973 to 1979 because of the declining enrolments; second, the cost squeeze in education will conceivably result in some higher pupil-teacher ratios; third, only about half of the available positions are likely to be filled by new graduates. The table which follows, from Husby (1972) accepts the first and third of these trends in its projections, but not the second.

ESTIMATES OF THE DEMAND FOR TEACHERS BY MANITOBA SCHOOL BOARDS 1972 to 1979

| Year | Last Year's Teaching Force Estimate | Number Leaving Teaching[1] | Current Year's Teaching Force Estimate | New Demand | New Teachers From Elsewhere[2] | Needed From Faculties |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1972 | 12,120 | 1,454 | 12,129 | 1,463 | 721 | 722 |
| 1973 | 12,129 | 1,455 | 12,008 | 1,334 | 667 | 667 |
| 1974 | 12,008 | 1,441 | 11,908 | 1,341 | 670 | 671 |
| 1975 | 11,908 | 1,429 | 11,794 | 1,315 | 657 | 658 |
| 1976 | 11,794 | 1,415 | 11,709 | 1,330 | 665 | 665 |
| 1977 | 11,709 | 1,405 | 11,620 | 1,316 | 658 | 658 |
| 1978 | 11,620 | 1,394 | 11,487 | 1,261 | 630 | 631 |
| 1979 | 11,487 | 1,378 | 11,263 | 1,154 | 577 | 577 |

Note: 1. Assumed 12.0 per cent of the teaching force each year.
2. Housewives returning to teaching, teachers from outside the province, former teachers who have improved their qualifications by attendance at universities, etc.

If these projections are accurate, and the 1972 estimate of the number leaving coincides reasonably well with the survey data (estimate 1454, actual 1470 for the 91% of the units which responded to the survey) it is clear that the prospects for new graduates are grim. They will have great difficulty finding a first appointment, and even greater difficulty retaining their position beyond the probationary period, in part because of the impact of tenure regulations.

Some general conclusions can be reached regarding turnover, tenure and new graduates: contrary to expectations, teacher turnover is not dropping sharply, at least so far, although the province is entering a period of teacher oversupply. The tenure provisions, in a period of oversupply of teachers, may have consequences quite unlike those originally intended. It may be that these provisions,rather than protecting dedicated teachers from abuses and injustices at the hands of employers, are at present insuring a teaching force with a lower overall level of competence than would otherwise be the case, and discriminating against newly qualified teachers. New graduates will be less and less needed in the schools during the seventies. Husby's (1972) conclusions are similar:

> The school systems of Manitoba, which have until very recent years girded themselves to a situation of almost constant expansion in terms of student enrollments, teacher recruitment, and the provision of increased facilities, will very soon be contending with conditions of decreasing student populations,

> surplus classrooms, and an oversupply of teachers competing strenuously for available positions. Teacher training institutions, which have been geared to turn out graduates in sufficient numbers to meet a steadily growing demand for teachers, will be under pressure from various groups to limit severely their number of graduates to avoid creating a state of chronic unemployment of certified teachers in the province. A number of institutional adjustments will therefore have to be made to adapt to changing circumstances.

Some policy changes seem to be amongst the appropriate "institutional adaptations", and the remainder of this paper will suggest two areas of policy which seem worth re-examineng. First, it would seem desirable for school boards to examine their teacher evaluation procedures, in an attempt to determine whether or not the overall ratio of releases between tenured and non-tenured teachers is a reflection of difference in competence, or the impact of the tenure regulations. If it is the latter, and for the province as a whole this seems indisputable, then a review by the boards of the regulations as they stand seems desirable.

It is possible to clarify the issue of tenure by referring to the Public Schools Act. First, it is important to note that neither "probation" nor "tenure" appears in the Act. The only provision is that contained in Section 281 (3), reproduced in full in Appendix B. The major distinction made here is that, after an agreement between a teacher and an employing board has been in effect for more than two years, its termination by the board can be submitted to an arbitration board for judgment as to whether "the reason given by the board for terminating the agreement constitutes cause for terminating the agreement".

Thus the judgment of the arbitration board is exclusively concerned with the validity of the reasons for terminating the agreement. In practice, this becomes an assessment of the school boards evaluation procedures; although no records of arbitration board decisions are available, the impression amongst senior administrators in the province seems to be that where adequate documentation and a clearly understood evaluation procedure exists, it is possible to win ratification of dismissals. (See Appendix C) This parallels experience elsewhere. In general it seems possible to conclude, on the basis of the data presented in Appendix C, that the provisions in the Public Schools Act regarding teacher tenure have not been adequately tested, to date. The fact that only 9 hearings have been held in responding units in the last 5 years suggests either that administrators are entirely happy with the tenured teachers they have, or that they are convinced that they cannot win tenure cases. The first seems unlikely, and the second mistaken, in view of the record, which shows that in 5 of8 cases in which a decision has been given, the dismissal was upheld. Thus boards can dismiss incompetent teachers, with some confidence, provided their teacher evaluation procedures are sound.

If this is the case, the situation of the new graduate becomes a little less hazardous. Boards faced with the necessity of reducing teaching staffs may choose to release the least competent teachers, rather than the probationary teachers. In the long run, this shift in policy by boards can only benefit the division, the teaching profession, and the students.

APPENDIX A

Division or District Name _____ No. ____

| | 1971 | 1972 |
|---|---|---|
| Total No. of Teachers Leaving Division | | |
| No. of Teachers Resigning* | | |
| No. of Teachers Being Released:* With Tenure (two years plus) | | |
| No. of Teachers Being Released: Without Tenure (under two years) | | |

* "Resigning" here includes all categories of teacher-initiated termination of contract. "Released" includes all categories of division-initiated termination of contract. Resignations which follow a suggestion by a supervisor that a resignation would be acceptable should be included under "Release".

APPENDIX B

From The Public Schools Act

Action on termination of agreement.

281(3) Where an agreement between a teacher and a board of trustees of a district or division is terminated by one of the parties thereto, and the other party, within seven days of receiving the notice that the agreement is terminated, requests the party terminating the agreement to give a reason for terminating the agreement, the party terminating the agreement shall, within seven days of receiving the request, give to the other party the reason for terminating the agreement; and, if the agreement has been in effect for more than two years and is terminated by the board of trustees of the district or division,

(a) the teacher, by notice in writing served on the board within seven days of the date the reason for terminating the agreement was given, may require that the matter of the termination of the agreement be submitted to an arbitration board composed of one representative appointed by the teacher and one representative appointed by the board, and a third person, who shall be chairman of the board of arbitration, mutually acceptable to, and chosen by, the two persons,so appointed, none of whom shall be a member or employee of the board, and, if one of the parties to the agreement is a division, none of whom shall be a member or employee of the division or a district within the division;

(b) each party shall appoint its representative to the board of arbitration within ten days of the serving of the notice by the second party under clause (a);

(c) where the members of the arbitration board appointed by the parties cannot agree on a decision, the chairman shall make the decision, and his decision shall be deemed to be a decision of the arbitration board;

(d) the issue before the arbitration board shall be whether or not the reason given by the board for terminating the agreement constitutes cause for terminating the agreement;

(e) where, after the completion of hearings, the arbitration board finds that the reason given for terminating the agreement does not constitute cause for terminating the agreement, it shall direct that the agreement be continued in force and effect, and, subject to appeal as provided in The Arbitration Act, the decision and direction of the arbitration board is binding upon the parties; and

(f) the arbitration board shall, within thirty days after its appointment, make its decision and shall immediately forward a copy thereof to each of the parties and to the minister.

APPENDIX C

MEMORANDUM

TO: All Superintendents

FROM: Peter Coleman
Director of Educational Services

DATE: September 5, 1972

Recently your division provided some data on teacher turnover, in response to our request. Analysis of this data suggests that teacher tenure is a very significant problem for Manitoba school divisions and districts. No data is available provincially on the outcome of arbitration board hearings under Section 281 (3) of the Public Schools Act, which provides for appeals against dismissal. Would you please answer the following questions, to allow the development of information about the overall impact of the tenure regulations.

1. In the period 1968-1972 inclusive, how many arbitration board hearings on dismissals were held in your division, to the best of your knowledge?

   TOTAL 9 (in 8 Divisions)

2. In how many of the hearings was the dismissal upheld?

   TOTAL 5 (1 pending)

3. Would you agree that, where documentation and evaluation procedures are adequate, dismissals are generally upheld?

   YES 17 NO 3 DON'T KNOW 29

   N= 49

Many thanks for providing this information, which may be of major importance to many divisions in the province.

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